

At the Crater of Vesuvius.

From the Pall Mall Gazette.

Often as Vesuvius has been described, there is one set of impressions which are perhaps the most generally interesting of all, but which, from the nature of the case, cannot so frequently be recorded. I refer to the impressions of one who has stood upon the lip of the crater and looked down while an eruption is actually in progress. It is not always that a view of such a scene can be obtained. It was at a time when an eruption was following in a manner that was quite sufficiently terrible, and when all the suffocating steam and vapors were being driven to one side of the mountain by a strong wind, that we were able to go up from the windward side, stand upon the lip of the crater, look down into the roaring abyss, and see what the eruption of a volcano looks like on the spot.

That, in truth, the only way of getting an idea of what a repository of horrors a volcano is. Without such a visit Vesuvius is often a little disappointing. It is not being a fine mountain, just like any other, says Mendelssohn. You may be a little disappointed when you see Vesuvius from below. But you have only to mount to the summit when an eruption of any magnitude is in progress to find yourself in the presence of appalling phenomena both of sight and sound. Choose the last few hours of daylight for your ascent, and then, as the darkness closes round, and the world below becomes hidden from your view, you stand at the crater in the presence of a scene for which no language can be very extravagant. For experienced mountaineers the effort required for the ascent is nothing remarkable, but for ordinary people it is laborious enough.

You are on the edge of the crater, and there you behold a scene full of awe and majesty. The suddenness with which you come upon it is quite startling. Going up you neither see nor hear anything. One moment you are clambering up the side of the cone amid profound silence; the next moment, as your head rises above the crater lip, you encounter a roar and a blaze which make you shrink back a little. This surprise is occasioned, I suppose, by the formation of the cone. It is a high, low, flat-topped mountain, with a sharp lip, about half a mile in diameter and some hundred yards in depth. Towards the bottom of this bowl, on the opposite side to where we stood, was a great hole, from which all the projectiles of the eruption were shot; the surface of the bowl being composed of lumps of lava, stones, and cinders, all of them smeared with sulphur, precisely like those upon which we were standing. As you mount the cone there is between you and the gulf an enormous wall, which fills everything in front of you with a white glare, and the tops of the cone itself you might be unaware that the mountain was disturbed. But a single step seems almost enough to transfer you from the most deathlike stillness to the grandest exhibition of force it is possible to conceive. Instead of the monotonous dull black of congealed lava on the lower levels, you have the deep brick red of stones that have been under the action of fire, the brightest vermilion, and every imaginable shade of orange and yellow that sulphur deposits are capable of taking. The ground is hot too, so hot, indeed, that you cannot keep your feet on the same spot for many seconds together. Between the clinks of the stones you can see that a few inches below the surface it is actually red hot. You thrust in the end of your stick for a moment and you pull it out charred. Over all the farther half of the crater there hangs a dense cloud of smoke and vapor; all around you there is an atmosphere of sulphur which sets you coughing; from among the small hills about you feet there issue with a hiss sulphurous jets of steam which nearly choke you as you pass over them; and then as you look down into the actual abyss you are face to face with the most appalling phenomena both of sight and sound which, perhaps, the whole of Europe has to offer. Among the crowd of strange sensations that are experienced at such a time the phenomena of sound are perhaps the most wonderful of all. What meets the ear is, if anything, even more terrific than what meets the eye. There is to sight the eruption is just what the imagination paints it beforehand. It does not consist, as the pictures necessarily lead one to suppose, of a continuous shower of fire. Still it does consist of a continuous shower of backshots shot out from a fire blazing on the top of the mountain; it is rather a series of explosions. Both the roar and glare of the great abyss are continuous. You look into the pit, and though you see no actual flame, yet its sides are in a state of constant incandescence. From the mouth of it there rises up incessantly a dense cloud of steam, and in the depths of it below you hear the noise of preparation for the outbreak that is next to come. Then you hear a sharper crackle, and then without further warning follows a loud explosion, which shoots into the air a torrent of white-hot missiles of every shape and size. So enormous are the forces at work that not only small pieces of stone and sulphur, such as you might carry away as mementoes of your visit, but huge blocks of mineral, each enough to load a railway flat wagon, are hurled into the air, and perfectly white heat, are tossed up as though they were so many cricket balls. The explosion lasts, perhaps, no longer than a minute; and then there is a cessation of some seconds, with the noise only of internal preparation once more, after which the explosion is repeated. That was nothing to the almost stupefying din that was going on before us—the world below could no longer be distinguished when we had nothing, but the clear straight overhead, and were truly alone with the mountain; when the varied coloring of the ground had disappeared in the darkness, and nothing could be seen but the gleam of the burning earth through the clinks at our feet, while the white-hot glaring ribbon of molten lava glided languidly down the mountain on one side, and before us was the flashing of the inner fire upon the cloud of vapor overhanging the abyss. Take all these together, and the scene is, indeed, rather different from what you picture to yourself as you calmly read in your newspaper that Vesuvius is once again in a state of eruption.

SHIPPING.

LORILLARD'S STEAMSHIP LINE FOR NEW YORK.

From and after this date, the rates of freight by this line will be ten cents per 100 lbs. for heavy goods; four cents per 100 lbs. for light goods; and one cent per 100 lbs. for passengers. Goods received at all times on covered piers. All goods forwarded by New York agent free of cartage except cartage.

FOR LIVERPOOL AND QUEENSTOWN.

APPOINTED TO SAIL AS FOLLOWS: CITY OF NEW YORK, Saturday, December 12, 1868. CITY OF NEW YORK, Saturday, December 12, 1868. CITY OF NEW YORK, Saturday, December 12, 1868.

RATES OF PASSENGER BY THE MAIL STEAMERS.

Payable in Gold. Payable in Sterling. FIRST CLASS, \$100. SECOND CLASS, \$75. THIRD CLASS, \$50. CHILDREN, HALF PRICE.

NEW EXPRESS LINE TO ALEXANDRIA.

NEW EXPRESS LINE TO ALEXANDRIA, GEORGETOWN, AND WASHINGTON, D. C. VIA CHARLOTTE AND NEWARK. SAILING ON MONDAY, DECEMBER 14, 1868.

NOTICE—FOR NEW YORK, VIA DELAWARE AND HARBOR CANAL.

THE SHIP PROPRIETORS OF THE DELAWARE AND HARBOR CANAL. SAILING ON MONDAY, DECEMBER 14, 1868.

PHILADELPHIA, RICHMOND AND NORFOLK STEAMSHIP LINE.

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TRUSSES.

KEELEY'S HARD RUBBER TRUSSES. KEELEY'S HARD RUBBER TRUSSES. KEELEY'S HARD RUBBER TRUSSES.

WIRE GUARDS.

FOR STORE FRONTS, AWNINGS, FACTORIES, ETC. Patent Wire Rolling Iron Bedsteads, Ornamenta Wire Work, Paper Makers' Wires, and every variety of Wire Work, manufactured by M. WALKER & SONS.

DR. KINKELIN, AFTER A RESIDENCE

DR. KINKELIN, AFTER A RESIDENCE OF TWENTY YEARS AT THE NORTHWEST CORNER OF MARKET AND WATER STREETS, HAS REMOVED TO SOUTH SEVENTH STREET, BETWEEN MARKET AND CHESTNUT.

CORN EXCHANGE

CORN EXCHANGE. CORN EXCHANGE. CORN EXCHANGE.

COTTON AND FLAX.

COTTON AND FLAX. COTTON AND FLAX. COTTON AND FLAX.

CITY ORDINANCES.

AN ORDINANCE To Make an Appropriation to the Guardians of the Poor of Money Collected by the Law Department. Resolved, by the Select and Common Councils of the City of Philadelphia, that the sum of five hundred dollars, the proceeds of an execution in favor of the City by the Sheriff, Walker and John S. Hammit, on a judgment in D. C., D. S. B., September term, 1866, No. 210, collected by the Sheriff and by him paid to the City Treasurer, said judgment being a security for the payment of an order of the Court of Quarter Sessions of the City and County of Philadelphia, made against the said Robert Walker, October 19, 1866, for the payment of five dollars per week for the support of his wife, Mary Walker, be and the same is hereby appropriated to the Guardians of the Poor of the City and County of Philadelphia, for the purpose of carrying out the order of court as aforesaid.

JOSEPH F. MARCER, President of Common Council.

ROBERT BETHEL, Assistant Clerk of Select Council.

WILLIAM S. STOKLEY, President of Select Council.

Approved this tenth day of December, Anno Domini one thousand eight hundred and sixty-eight (A. D. 1868).

MORTON MCMICHAEL, Mayor of Philadelphia.

AN ORDINANCE To make an Additional Appropriation to the Department of the City Treasurer. Resolved, by the Select and Common Councils of the City of Philadelphia do ordain, That the sum of forty-five hundred dollars be and the same is hereby appropriated to the following items in the appropriation to the Department of the City Treasurer for the year 1868, to-wit: To Item 3. For books, printing, and stationery, five hundred and sixteen dollars.

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CITY ORDINANCES.

RESOLUTION To Make Certain Transfers in the Appropriation to the Department for Supplying the City with Water, approved July 10, 1855. Resolved, by the Select and Common Councils of the City of Philadelphia, That the City Controller be and he is hereby authorized to make the following transfers in the appropriation to the Department for Supplying the City with Water, approved July 10, 1855, to-wit: From Item 5 (for Pumping Main), twenty-eight hundred and twenty-eight (\$28,288) dollars and sixty-eight (68) cents.

JOSEPH F. MARCER, President of Common Council.

ROBERT BETHEL, Assistant Clerk of Select Council.

WILLIAM S. STOKLEY, President of Select Council.

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RESOLUTION To Instruct the City Solicitor to Pay Damages on Vienna Street. Resolved, by the Select and Common Councils of the City of Philadelphia, That the City Solicitor be and he is hereby instructed to draw a warrant for thirty dollars in favor of Charles W. Fraley, and one for the same amount in favor of George Dehaven, to pay for damages on Vienna Street, to be taken from the appropriation made by ordinance, entitled "An ordinance to make an appropriation for the taking of property for the opening of Vienna Street," approved May 6, 1865, out of the sum thereby directed to be paid to Michael Rowan, and so much of said ordinance as directs payment of any part of the appropriation thereby made to the said Michael Rowan be and the same is hereby repealed.

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MORTON MCMICHAEL, Mayor of Philadelphia.

RESOLUTION To Change the Place of Voting in the Nineteenth Division of the Fifteenth Ward. Resolved, by the Select and Common Councils of the City of Philadelphia, That the place of voting in the Nineteenth division of the Fifteenth ward be and the same is hereby changed from the house of H. Horowitz, at 221 1/2 Spruce Street, to the house of Nicholas Grow, northeast corner of Twenty second and Callowhill streets, the former place of voting being no longer available for the purpose.

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